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ABSTRACT

This report draws on two teacher-researchers' yearlong collaboration in co-planning, co-teaching, and co-researching a writers' workshop in a fifth-grade classroom. Alternatives were sought to a more traditional staff development model in which one professional who is considered to have greater expertise and skill supports and coaches another professional. In this case, both individuals were experienced and knowledgeable language arts teachers who were inexperienced at using a writers' workshop approach. As teaching colleagues, they engaged in four critical practices to support their learning: talking about teaching, shared planning and preparation, classroom observations, and training together and training one another. As research colleagues, they inquired about meaningful questions and problems of practice. This report examines questions about what a researcher and an experienced teacher can do and learn together in a restructured context, and about the benefits and difficulties of collaborative professional practice. It explores the collaborative process and discusses issues related to collaborative planning and teaching, using the research process as part of the daily teaching practice. The report also discusses outcomes or products of collaboration. The report concludes with a discussion of ways in which collaboration can play a critical role in supporting new professional roles for teachers and researchers. (Contains 29 references.) (Author/LL)

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Center for the
Learning and Teaching
of Elementary Subjects

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Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects

The **Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects** was awarded to Michigan State University in 1987 after a nationwide competition. Funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, the Elementary Subjects Center is a major project housed in the Institute for Research on Teaching (IRT). The program focuses on conceptual understanding, higher order thinking, and problem solving in elementary school teaching of mathematics, science, social studies, literature, and the arts. Center researchers are identifying exemplary curriculum, instruction, and evaluation practices in the teaching of these school subjects; studying these practices to build new hypotheses about how the effectiveness of elementary schools can be improved; testing these hypotheses through school-based research; and making specific recommendations for the improvement of school policies, instructional materials, assessment procedures, and teaching practices. Research questions include, What content should be taught when teaching these subjects for understanding and use of knowledge? How do teachers concentrate their teaching to use their limited resources best? and In what ways is good teaching subject matter-specific?

The work is designed to unfold in three phases, beginning with literature review and interview studies designed to elicit and synthesize the points of view of various stakeholders (representatives of the underlying academic disciplines, intellectual leaders and organizations concerned with curriculum and instruction in school subjects, classroom teachers, state- and district-level policymakers) concerning ideal curriculum, instruction, and evaluation practices in these five content areas at the elementary level. Phase II involves interview and observation methods designed to describe current practice, and in particular, best practice as observed in the classrooms of teachers believed to be outstanding. Phase II also involves analysis of curricula (both widely used curriculum series and distinctive curricula developed with special emphasis on conceptual understanding and higher order applications), as another approach to gathering information about current practices. In Phase III, models of ideal practice will be developed, based on what has been learned and synthesized from the first two phases, and will be tested through classroom intervention studies.

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Abstract

This report draws on two teacher-researchers' yearlong collaboration in coplanning, coteaching and coresearching a writers' workshop in a fifth-grade classroom. The authors sought alternatives to a more traditional staff development model where one professional who is considered to have greater expertise and skill supports and coaches another professional. They are both experienced and knowledgeable language arts teachers who were inexperienced at using a writers' workshop approach. As teaching colleagues they engaged in four critical practices to support their learning: talking about teaching, shared planning and preparation, classroom observations, and training together and training one another. As research colleagues they inquired about meaningful questions and problems of practice.

This report examines the following questions: What can a researcher and an experienced teacher do and learn together in a restructured context--about teaching writing, about supporting ongoing professional learning, and about the teacher-researcher role--that they may not be able to do or learn separately? What are the benefits and difficulties of collaborative professional practice and learning in a restructured school setting? The authors examine the collaborative process itself and discuss issues related to collaborative planning and teaching, using the research process as part of their daily teaching practice and bringing new perspectives to their work. Outcomes or products of collaboration are also discussed, such as what the teacher-researchers learned about teaching and curriculum development in a writers' workshop, children as writers, supporting a novice in learning to teach literacy, and engaging in a broader community of discourse about their work. The report concludes with a discussion of ways in which collaboration can play a critical role in supporting new professional roles for teachers and researchers.

COLLABORATIVE TEACHING AND RESEARCH: ASKING "WHAT DOES IT MEAN?"

Cheryl L. Rosaen and Barbara R. Lindquist[1]

> Enter Room 122, a learning community in a learning setting. Teachers collaborate with colleagues in the school and at the university. Students collaborate with teachers, university folks, and peers. Our goal is learning, not performance. Everyone is responsible for [his] own learning. Students and teachers value and respect each other's ideas, ask questions, collaborate, and share publicly their ideas and the revision of those ideas. Personal thinking is allowed and encouraged. Students are given time to explore their thinking so they can know how it has changed. The learning setting changes the concept of time and control. Students are given time to think and collaborate. They take control of their learning. Students and teachers need to construct and make sense of their new knowledge. Students and teachers struggle together. *Everyone is a learner.* Students are active and teachers are practicing the art of teaching! Now just imagine what could happen if teachers were given time to collaborate and think! (Lindquist, School Newsletter, June 7, 1991, emphasis added)

This is one version of creating an environment conducive to continued learning for educational professionals. We believe professional learning is critical if our schools are going to figure out ways to help all children learn successfully; yet we all know we have a long way to go before we reach this goal. A popular and compelling idea for fostering professional learning is for school and university

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[1]Cheryl L. Rosaen, assistant professor of teacher education at Michigan State University, is a senior researcher with the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects. Barbara R. Lindquist is a fifth-grade teacher at an MSU Professional Development School. The authors work closely with a group of teacher-researchers in the Literacy in Science and Social Studies Project to improve and study their practice. They would like to acknowledge joint contributions of all project participants in data collection and analysis and in developing the ideas regarding learning community, teaching for understanding, and integrated teaching and learning that are discussed in this paper. Additional project participants are Kathleen Roth (senior researcher); Constanza Hazelwood, Kathleen Peasley, and Corinna Hasbach (research assistants); Carol Ligett (third-grade teacher) and Elaine Hoekwater (fifth-grade teacher). Hazelwood and Peasley assisted with field notes, audiotaping, and interviewing. Lindquist and Rosaen were responsible for teaching writing to two classes of fifth graders while other project members taught science and social studies in different collaborative arrangements.

faculty to collaborate. After all, we have had our difficulties working separately, so why not try joining efforts and pooling our resources? When new endeavors such as collaboration are undertaken, it is important to examine the extent to which they are helpful to all participants, instead of assuming they are worthwhile because the original idea sounds good (Rosaen & Hoekwater, 1990).

This report draws on our yearlong collaboration in coplanning, coteaching, and coresearching a writers' workshop in a fifth-grade classroom. It examines the following questions: What can a researcher and an experienced teacher do and learn together in a restructured context--about teaching writing, about supporting ongoing professional learning, and about the teacher-researcher role--that they may not be able to do or learn separately? What are the benefits and difficulties of collaborative professional practice and learning in a restructured school setting? Throughout our collaborative work across the year, we reflected on these issues through our research, discussion and journal writing, and have some insights to share with those who are interested in and committed to finding ways that universities and schools can work together more effectively to make schools better learning communities for children.

Our discussion is organized into three parts. First we describe briefly the nature of our collaboration and discuss the purpose and focus of our work. In the second section we discuss the benefits and difficulties of two essential aspects of collaboration. One aspect is the *collaborative process* itself, including issues related to collaborative planning and teaching, using the research process as part of our teaching practice, and bringing new perspectives to our joint work. Outcomes or *products of collaboration* are also examined. For example, we discuss what we learned

about teaching and curriculum development in a writers' workshop, children as writers, supporting a novice in learning to teach literacy, and engaging in a broader community of discourse about our work. In the final section, we reflect on ways in which collaboration can play an critical role in supporting new professional roles for teachers and researchers.

Collaboration as Shared Experiences in Two Arenas

We have been working with a group of educators (university teacher educator/researchers, graduate assistants, teachers) at an MSU Professional Development School since the Fall of 1989 in a project called Literacy in Science and Social Studies (LISSS). The focus of our work has been to explore ways to engage students genuinely in their education and to create classrooms that are learning settings for *all* students. A brief history of the project is given below to provide context for discussing our particular collaborative work in coteaching and coresearching a writers' workshop in Lindquist's fifth-grade classroom.

The LISSS Project

During the first year of the project (1989-90), our group focused on collaborative study of what visions of teaching and learning in science, social studies and writing seem most promising. We also examined the role writing and discourse (questioning, listening, sharing ideas and talking) play in such visions. Work during the second year (1990-91) focused on understanding and using "research for teaching" (Noddings, 1986) by project participants taking on the teacher-researcher role. Teachers, researchers and graduate assistants coplanned and cotaught in two fifth-grade classrooms to create a series of case studies in science, social studies, and writing. We also saw this as an opportunity to go beyond our study group format of

learning together to find classroom-based ways to engage in continued learning about teaching, curriculum, and children. We investigated questions related to *classroom teaching and learning*:

(a) ***Knowledge, Skills, and Ways of Knowing:*** How did the students participate in literacy activities and the writing process? What qualitative changes were evident in written products over the year? What knowledge, skills, and dispositions were developed? (b) ***Ways of Being in a Learning Community:*** How did students interpret and participate in the social context in which the literacy learning took place? How did their interpretation and participation shape their writing knowledge and skills and their disposition to write? What is the nature of a learning community that supports *all* children's learning (race, class, gender issues)?

We also explored questions related to our *collaborative work* :

(a) ***The Collaborative Process***: What is the nature of our collaborative work? What are the problems, complexities, and benefits of this kind of teaching and collaborative work? (b) ***Learning from Collaboration***: Which aspects of our collaboration support our learning, and how? How can teachers and researchers work together to create "cases" of teaching and learning, and how can these be shared in productive ways with preservice and inservice teachers as well as the research community?

The Teacher-Researcher Role in a Writers' Workshop

Our collaboration in Lindquist's fifth-grade classroom centered around both of us taking on a teacher-researcher role. We both shared teaching responsibilities (coplanning and coteaching a writers' workshop on a regular basis across a school year) and research responsibilities (generating research questions, planning and implementing data collection, and engaging in data analysis on a regular basis across the year). To provide time for the teacher-researcher role, Lindquist's work pattern was restructured to include the mornings for teaching and the afternoons for collaborative curriculum planning, study, and research. Rosaen devoted half of her faculty load time to collaborative curriculum planning, teaching, and research.

Our study group readings and discussions from the previous year had convinced us that setting up a writers' workshop was a worthy goal for the year, and we knew we needed to develop the workshop in ways that supported students in changing well ingrained norms for writing that stood in stark contrast to the image we had in mind. We wanted to study our teaching and the sense students made of it to learn more about ways to improve our teaching of writing over time. When she reflected on our year together, Lindquist commented on how taking on a research role brought a shift in emphasis in her work:

> It's thinking more deeply about "What does this all mean?" and I think that's the dimension that this year took on for me that was different from things that I had done in the past. I think I've always thought about "How can I help the kids? How can I do this with the kids? How can I do that with the kids?" but this year I feel like I not only thought about that, but also thought about "What does this mean for my teaching? What does this mean for the way I'm doing things?". . . I guess I was just more reflective and willing, I guess, to take the time to analyze. (Lindquist Interview 7/11/91)

The coplanning and coteaching roles afforded ways for each of us to work on *improving our practice* in meaningful ways. We sought alternatives to a more traditional staff development model where one professional who is considered to have greater expertise and skill supports and coaches another professional (e.g., Showers, 1985). We were both experienced and knowledgeable language arts teachers who were inexperienced at teaching in a writers' workshop situation. We each drew on our unique backgrounds and experiences to support each other as we made a transition from more traditional approaches to teaching writing to working within a workshop format. As teaching colleagues we engaged in four "critical practices" to support our learning (Little, 1987): talk about teaching, shared planning and preparation, classroom observation, training together and training one another.

Lindquist is an experienced teacher who had tried using a process approach to writing in the past but was not satisfied with it. Our collaborative arrangement was a chance for her to understand and use ideas in her teaching that she had been reading about in research articles, but this time she would not be experimenting alone and would have the benefit of someone to talk to as she attempted to change her practice:

> I don't think I would have been able to progress as far in one year as I feel like I did if I hadn't had that close contact and shared a common experience with someone. I think it would have taken me a lot longer to see some significant changes in the way I was approaching kids, in the way I was seeing things. . . . After so many years of doing it on your own and only talking to yourself about ideas, that really gets stale, and you really need to have people sharing some classroom time and classroom experiences on a regular enough basis I think to really make progress and to really move forward in your thinking. It really helped me a great deal this year to have someone else that had had a shared experience to be able to talk to that person. (Lindquist interview 7/11/91)

Rosaen is also an experienced teacher but had not been teaching in the classroom on a regular basis for a number of years. Although she had tried some strategies associated with a workshop approach in her teaching of writing (e.g., allowing for student choice in writing topics and genres, conferencing with students individually about their writing), she had never specifically tried using a workshop approach in her teaching. Collaborating with Lindquist was an opportunity to get back into the classroom to use new ideas about writing instruction with fifth-grade children and get insights into the difficulties of implementing these ideas in a classroom context. As noted in her journal entry, conducting research on others' teaching and reading others' research were not the same as researching her own teaching as a way to understand new approaches to teaching writing:

> I only understood conferencing in theory. I could rely on pieces of my previous practice, but I needed to re-work and re-think ways in which I would interact with kids about their writing. I was learning how to genuinely converse with kids as an interested audience, and shed the role of teacher as evaluator. . . Barb's knowledge of fifth-grade kids really helped; she was someone to bounce ideas back and forth with so we were jointly constructing these units. (Rosaen journal entry, 1/21/91)

Our shared experiences in taking on the researcher role were a way to *inquire about meaningful questions and problems of practice* that emerged out of actual curriculum development and classroom teaching. We wanted to conduct "research *for* teaching" (Noddings, 1986) and bring teachers' voices, the questions they ask, and the interpretive frames they use to understand and improve their own teaching practices to classroom research (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990). It is becoming more common for teachers and researchers to work together to improve practice and extend the professional role (Strickland, 1988) and to build new theories of teaching and learning (Cole, 1989), and our work contributes to both areas. We crafted our

collaborative arrangement around the assumptions that we both had valuable contributions to make to our teacher-researcher roles, and that we both had further learning to do about research, about the teaching of writing, and about students as young writers. We intended for the relationship to be interdependent and mutually beneficial (Cole, 1989). In addition, we were looking for ways to reconceptualize the role of research in education, to find ways for research to serve and support practice, not just be about practice. The closer we can come to conceptualizing teaching as research (Hollingsworth, 1990), the greater the chances of it becoming an integral and meaningful tool for improving practice. We were concerned that without finding ways to make research an important aspect of our collaborative practice, many important experiences could go unnoticed and unexamined in the press of daily classroom life. For example, Lindquist reflected on how reading field notes and conducting interviews with students helped her reflect on how the discourse in her classroom evolved across the year:

> You know, that's one of the things that as a teacher you don't always get to know how, what happens or how they [the students] absorb things and how that will influence them in the years to come . . . [our study this year showed us that] the classroom talk became much more focused on writing as the year went on. At the beginning of the year they were easily distracted and towards the end of the year, most of the students were focused on a self-created task when they came to class. (Lindquist interview, 7/11/91)

Our shared experiences had more impact and were more meaningful because we had a common agenda in two arenas--*teaching* writing in the classroom and *researching* the teaching and learning process. By sharing the work of both teacher and researcher, we found several advantages over singling out one arena in which to collaborate. Learnings from each arena informed work in the other arena

across the year. In the section that follows, we examine the benefits and difficulties of the collaborative process, and discuss the results of our collaboration.

Learning From Collaborative Work

Collaborative work involves both the process of working together and the products that result from the collaboration. We found ourselves reflecting on what in means to work together and what the process of collaboration actually involves. We also found it equally worthwhile to reflect on what the results of our collaboration were, or what it all added up to. As we reflected on both arenas, we saw how integrally they are connected. The theme of "time" emerged as both an advantage and a difficulty associated with the collaborative process and also as a necessity for participating in and learning from this kind of work.

The Collaborative Process: Expanded Roles and New Perspectives

Working together as teacher-researchers meant spending our time differently than either of us had spent in more traditional versions of being a teacher or a researcher. Since we were each taking on expanded roles, but also sharing each other's roles, this was a unique opportunity to "make the familiar strange" (Erickson, 1986) and benefit from each other's insights. By purposely blurring the boundaries between being a researcher and being a teacher, the nature of how we spent time in and out of classrooms changed.

Coteaching and Colearning

In the classroom, our working arrangement as coteachers evolved across the year. When the year started, Lindquist took a more prominent role as teacher while Rosaen focused on preliminary research tasks. But by the second week of school, we began discussing teaching ideas in relation to students' interactions in the classroom,

and Rosaen began doing some teaching also. As we look back now and reflect on our work pattern, it is interesting to note that we did not explicitly decide how or when we would teach together in the classroom or how we would collaborate during planning sessions. Instead, the needs of the students as learners and our own teaching strengths seemed to drive those decisions. We can also see now that our tentative and ever-changing arrangements allowed us to get to know each other's needs and strengths and to build trust over time. On any given day, one of us might begin the workshop while the other watched and added comments as appropriate; sometimes we traded off parts of a lesson; we both worked daily with students during their writing time. We often found ourselves saying things like, "Why don't you do this part; you know the story better," or "I want to hear how you do this discussion, so you get it started." Rosaen's reflections on beginning the author's chair routine provides an example of the extemporaneous way in which we addressed our needs as they arose:

> The kids are really novices at a lot of these things. Like Barb's been trying to have author's chair on Mondays and she's feeling very frustrated with the way they're responding to each others' writing. I feel like it's to be expected that they don't know how to do this and that we have to teach them. I went in today and did a mini-lesson on how you can just receive someone's piece and tell them what you liked about it without having to launch a bunch of advice about what they should be doing differently. (Rosaen interview, 11/27/90)

This flexible arrangement allowed us to draw on our strengths, observe and learn from each other, and have the opportunity to step back and observe to reflect more carefully about how things were going. Our two pairs of eyes and ears not only eased the teaching and planning load, but enriched what we were able to do, see, and hear along the way.

Our teacher-researcher arrangement also afforded an unusual teacher education opportunity. Lindquist's student teacher, Derek,[2] was completing a language arts practicum in Lindquist's classroom that was part of a methods class taught by Rosaen. This meant bringing another learner's needs to an already complex situation. In October we brought Derek into our planning and teaching collaboration to help him meet course requirements in ways that were still connected to the curriculum in the classroom. Thus, Derek joined us in colearning about the teaching and learning going on in room 122.

Colearning as We Coplanned

Because we were attempting to change our approach to teaching writing, we not only needed to support our students in making a transition in the way they participated as writers in our classroom, but also needed to support ourselves in changing our participation as teachers. Rosaen's journal entry reflects her awareness that our planning needed to support students in many areas of their learning as well as acknowledging that she and Lindquist did not have the planning issue all figured out before they started:

> This is a chance to plan on multiple levels--a chance to develop plans along different strands to support students' learning to collaborate and participate in a community of writers, try new forms of writing, become aware of the audience's role in the writing process, understand what it means to revise and not just edit a piece, etc. I'm struggling along with Barb to conceptualize the "subject matter" of writing and find ways to weave in teaching students to understand and appreciate literature. We are working together to find representations of ways to think about the writing process, such as a "workshop" image in practicing descriptive writing techniques much like a craftsperson might do with learning new woodworking techniques.
>
> When planning in multiple layers, you need to assess in multiple layers too. A unit may be tremendously successful in one area and not

[2]Names of student teacher and students are pseudonyms.

> in another--so does it mean "success" or not? Knowing that one needs to plan on different levels and actually figuring out how to develop and carry out such plans are two very different experiences! (Rosaen journal entry, 1/21/91)

To manage planning for the many areas in which we wanted to support students' development and to support ourselves in rethinking and developing a yearlong writing curriculum, we developed our curriculum in units that lasted anywhere from two to six weeks. Looking back over our year, we discovered three "phases" to our planning that reflect our intentions for supporting our students, but also reflect three phases in our own working relationship. We call these phases Laying Groundwork (Units 1-3), Initiation (Units 4-5), and Delving More Deeply Into Authorship (Units 6-7). Table 1 includes a summary of the units and how they fit into the three phases to support our students' writing development. In the following discussion we elaborate on how the three phases also supported our transition as teachers.

Laying groundwork. As we both knew from our years of teaching experience, the first few months of any school year can be critical in setting the tone in the classroom, establishing routines and norms, and providing a foundation for working relationships. We also knew that this was a critical time in building our own working relationship if our teacher-researcher collaboration was going to work. We clustered the first three units we developed into the laying groundwork phase because they were vehicles for developing norms and routines as well as providing a foundation for further subject matter learning. During these units, students could--with support--participate in the entire writing cycle (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing) and interactions associated with different aspects of the cycle. They could be supported in learning to collaborate, and get to know each other as

Table 1.
Unit Overview and Curriculum Strands

PHASE 1: LAYING GROUNDWORK	Strand 1: The Learning Community	Strand 2: The Writing Process	Strand 3: Literary Understanding and Appreciation
Unit 1: All About Me Sept. 4-24	Background: relationship building: trust, respect; modeling how students could help each other with writing and how to collaborate; learning is celebrated	Foreground: overview of the writing process (one complete cycle) revising techniques: leads, word choice, use of details, focus parents night as occasion to publish	
Unit 2: Animalia Sept. 25-Oct. 8	Foreground: collaboration through cooperative groups; public sharing and revision of ideas; ownership, commitment, shared responsibility, learning is celebrated	Background: writing process embedded in way the task was structured: brainstorm ideas, use of details, sense-making	Background: Identify why *Animalia* is appealing and interesting; use of quality literature as model
Unit 3: Descriptive Writing Oct. 9-Nov. 11	Background: use of evidence and developing shared expertise about what makes good description; public sharing and revision of ideas; learning is celebrated; ownership, commitment, shared responsibility	Foreground: practicing the writer's craft: revision techniques to create better description through use of 5 senses and exaggeration; revise before you write	Background: use of literature as models; revision of published literature

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PHASE 2: INITIATION	Strand 1: The Learning Community	Strand 2: The Writing Process	Strand 3: Literary Understanding and Appreciation
Unit 4: Establishing a Writers' Workshop Nov. 8-Dec. 19	Foreground: how to work together as a community of writers; use patterns established to support and develop capacity to help each other (see Strand 2); personally meaningful learning as a goal	Foreground: responding to each other's writing: receiving a piece, author's day, getting topic ideas; visit from author; Christmas walk-through	Background: literature share day as routine; share literature on winter topics as source of ideas and models
Unit 5: Poetry in Writers' Workshop Jan 7-Feb. 7	Background: use author's day and literature share day as pattern to encourage celebration and sharing; "I wish" group poem; personally meaningful learning as a goal	Background: use writing process to create poetry or other forms of writing; students have choice of topic and form	Foreground: learn about aspects of poetry: simile, personification, line breaks, color poems, "I wish" poems, poetic license use published pieces as models

PHASE 3: DELVING MORE DEEPLY INTO AUTHORSHIP	Strand 1: The Learning Community	Strand 2: The Writing Process	Strand 3: Literary Understanding and Appreciation
Unit 6: Authors' Design Feb. 13-March 21	Background: inquiry, asking questions, public sharing of ideas, use of evidence and shared expertise, valuing and respecting others ideas, personally meaningful learning as a goal	Background: use authors' design as a framework for own writing	**Foreground:** understanding relationship among aspects of authors' design: author's topic and purpose, topic knowledge, choice of form, audience, audience response
Transition Period March 25-April 18	Background: continue writers' workshop as schedule permits (testing, vacation interruptions) sharing of student writing and published literature	Foreground: select piece to put in middle school folder and write a paragraph about self	Background: create "wish list" of books to order for library (also served as information on student interests for next unit)
Unit 7: Authors' Exploration April 22-May 16	Background: collaborate with others to explore different book sets and develop focus question	Background: study authors' biographies and book sets to get ideas for topics and forms; study own "All About Me" piece from viewpoint of memoir; develop focus question for finding out more about fiction, biography, or subject matter	**Foreground:** use biographical materials and book sets to explore: Where do authors get ideas? What do authors do to improve their writing? Explore book sets: fiction, biography, subject matter sets

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people, writers and learners better. They could also be introduced to descriptive writing and revising techniques, and practice the craft of writing. Growth of this kind would require not only developing appropriate subject matter knowledge, but also require transformations in attitudes, values and commitments (Jackson, 1986) associated with good writing.

At the same time, we as coteachers and developers of new curriculum became better acquainted with our own strengths, ways of organizing our planning and teaching and ways of conceptualizing what it means to teach students to write. The collaborative process caused us to make explicit our underlying assumptions about our students' learning needs and interests and our assumptions about ways to build on their prior knowledge and experiences. It caused us to examine what it means to "lay groundwork" for future experiences, to consider what introductory experiences would foster attitudes, habits and desires conducive to further learning (Dewey, 1938). Consequently we developed a planning pattern where we developed a sketch of a unit--defining broad goals in relation to what we understood about our students, identifying resources, brainstorming strategies. Once the unit began we reflected daily on our teaching and our students' learning and revised our plans in response to our discoveries and insights. During this phase we developed a work pattern that we continued to use throughout the school year.

Initiation. We clustered our fourth and fifth units into an "initiation" period because it was during these units that we opened up the classroom and provided ways for students to "be writers" in ways that we had not provided before. As teachers, we were also being initiated into adopting new practices that required different role relationships with students and different ways of spending our time in the classroom.

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We drew on many of the books and journal articles that we had discussed the previous year as well as our own previous teaching experiences to design our evolving new practices. Instead of assigning writing projects, we set into motion new routines that enabled students to make their own choices about the topics, forms, deadlines, and level of collaboration for their writing. Routines (e.g., journal writing, author's day and literature sharing day) were implemented to encourage students to collaborate on an ongoing basis as *they* felt the need or desire. Our teaching activities shifted from directing the structure of our entire writing time (e.g., deciding when students would discuss, write, etc.) to providing brief mini-lessons on poetry to introduce ideas for writing topics and forms. Our intention was that students could *choose* to take advantage of these ideas (or not).

Writing conferences shifted focus from our making the rounds to make sure everyone was keeping up with the assigned task (and also discussing the content of drafts as needed) to helping students realize their own intentions as writers. These changes took place partly because we sensed the students were ready for them, and partly because we were ready to be initiated into more radical changes in our own teaching roles and practices. During our usual planning time we spent a great deal of time discussing what was happening during writing time and whether our actions on a particular day were supporting the kinds of learning we hoped to foster--continued development of particular knowledge and skills, as well as changes in attitudes, values and interests. Making our goals explicit to each other and reflecting on a regular basis about our students' progress also meant being initiated into a different way of constructing our curriculum that centered around students' evolving interest and involvement in the writing process. We also reflected on

whether the social organization in our classroom was conducive to sharing control over our curriculum more democratically with our students (Shannon, 1989).

Delving more deeply into authorship. Our final phase of the year focused on deepening and enriching our students' and our own understandings of what it means to be an author--what authors do, think about, and value as part of their work. While students in our community of writers continued to pursue their own writing projects and goals, we aimed, in our authors' design unit, to provide occasions for mutual study of how authors might approach constructing a piece and what they take into consideration (e.g., relationship among the topic, purpose or message, audience, form). During the next unit, authors' exploration, we studied ways in which different types of literature (e.g., mystery, fantasy, subject matter trade books, biography) can provide ideas and models for good writing, and where authors get ideas for various writing topics and forms. This unit was also developed out of our perceived need to be more responsive to our students' interests and their growing independence as writers.

It was during this phase that we bumped up against students' resistance to our instructional input and support for them as writers. Instead of having mini-lessons, they wanted to write, write, write. Instead of worrying about quality, they churned out page after page of unrevised description that we thought needed more care and attention. This did not surprise us because we had read about such difficulties in other teacher-researchers' experiences. These realities caused us to delve more deeply into our own subject matter knowledge and knowledge of resources to design and teach our units. We worked together to find productive ways to channel the intense interest and motivation we saw in more fruitful directions. For example, we

organized book exploration groups to help students find others in the class who shared their interests in particular authors or genres. For some students these discussion groups led to collaborative writing in which students used the new knowledge, values, attitudes and interests they had developed to pursue experimenting with new topics and genres.

Curriculum strands in the foreground and background. Our regular collaborative work also caused us to make explicit what we eventually called three "curriculum strands" that were woven throughout our unit planning and teaching across the year:

Strand 1: Creating and supporting the learning community

Strand 2: Developing writing knowledge and skills

Strand 3: Developing literary understanding and appreciation

As we planned each unit, one or more sets (strands) of concepts, skills, attitudes and dispositions were more prominent (in the "foreground" of our planning and teaching) while some strands were less prominent (in the "background" of our planning and teaching). Table 1 shows the varying emphasis of the three curriculum strands in each unit. Like the curriculum phases, we identified these strands gradually across the year through our regular planning and reflections--by looking back on our planning as we developed new units, by making note of the goals we set for each unit and the areas that we were supporting more prominently, and by looking at which areas needed further support in future units. The strands provided a way for us to conceptualize and single out a curriculum area temporarily for further development.

Strand 1--The learning community strand was important to us because our studies during the previous year and our own teaching experience convinced us that a writers' workshop requires a different kind of learning community than a traditional approach to teaching writing. Hermine Marshall's (1990) distinction between viewing the classroom as a workplace compared to a learning place was helpful to us in defining the *emphasis* we value in our teaching. We used this distinction as a starting point to develop our own ideas regarding subject matter knowledge, skills, dispositions, teacher and student roles and what would represent "learning."[3] For example, in traditional classrooms, getting work done is emphasized over what is actually learned from getting the work done. In a work-oriented setting, subject matter is packaged neatly, defined and ready to be "delivered" to students. In a learning setting, knowledge is socially constructed and developed by people. This means that evidence, not authority, is used to construct new knowledge and judge the merits of ideas. This places each person in the position of sharing expertise, rather than limiting expertise to knowledge found in texts or in the teacher's head. Moreover, thinking, questioning, discussing, learning from mistakes, trying new ideas and so on are valued and rewarded as much as completing a finished product. This meant we needed to create opportunities for students to discuss these issues and we needed to model and practice talking about text in new ways. We also needed to provide time for thinking and talking about text.

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[3]This metaphor was elaborated in collaboration with all LISSS Project participants within and across the teaching of science, social studies and writing. It has been an important communication tool for us to think about how our teaching in the three different subject matter areas is similar and different.

In a learning setting students not only focus on learning particular subject matter concepts but also on knowing how and why certain concepts and ideas are connected and useful. Understanding what it means to be a writer is part of the subject matter "content" in a learning place. Additionally, taking risks, challenging ideas, listening, collaborating, appreciating diversity, responding to and respecting others' ideas are important social behaviors in the learning place, since they are necessary aspects of constructing knowledge. Our image of the learner in the learning place is someone who feels a sense of ownership and commitment to his or her own learning, and has the disposition to inquire and ask why.

Although we did not have this image developed fully and clearly at the start of the school year, we did realize that many students would most likely need to be supported in making a transition from being participants in a traditional work setting classroom to taking on qualities of learners who participate fully in a learning setting. Especially at the beginning of the year, this strand was prominent in our teaching and was an important part of supporting and inviting students to participate in our classroom. For example, we introduced sharing of drafts for feedback during the first unit (All About Me) by using Rosaen's emerging draft of her own "All About Me" piece as an illustration of how to share one's writing and the benefits of receiving feedback and assistance. Discussion of how to model behaviors appropriate to a learning setting were prominent in our planning. Our second unit (Animalia) purposely required students to create a group product--their own alphabet page patterned after those found in the book *Animalia* by Graeme Base (1986). A great deal of our conversation focused on how the groups were functioning, what it takes to collaborate as writers, and whether the tasks we created

were occasions for students to collaborate genuinely. We returned to an emphasis on the learning community strand when we introduced the writers' workshop format during November and December. New routines were being introduced (e.g., author's day, literature share day) that required purposeful support in helping students benefit from them. Our collaboration caused us to make explicit our assumptions about the knowledge and experiences students brought to our learning community and ways we intended to support their development. It also enabled us to reflect regularly about whether the social organization that was evolving matched our intentions for the writing community.

Strands 2 and 3--For us, developing writing knowledge and skills as well as literary understanding and appreciation are at the heart of participating in a literate environment. Although our 45-minute block of time each morning was devoted to the teaching of writing,[4] we knew that without bringing literature into the writing curriculum we would be missing important sources of ideas and models for good writing. In the early units (1-4), we devoted more attention to Strands 1 and 2 to help students not only learn what it means to use the writing process strategically but to work together in doing so. As described earlier, our first three units were also designed to teach particular knowledge about good writing and ways to use that knowledge to improve one's own writing.

Although we had used literature as models almost on a daily basis, Strand 3--developing understanding and appreciation of literature--became prominent and

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[4]Due to several logistical factors in our project arrangements, it was not possible at this time to create a block of time for both reading and writing. There was a block of time devoted to reading and literature study in the afternoon taught by a coteacher. Through creation of this "restructured" time, Lindquist was able to take on the teacher-researcher role.

remained prominent for the rest of the year beginning in January. If we wanted students to go beyond expressive writing where they wrote about personal experiences in narrative form (something we encouraged from the beginning in their journal writing), we felt it essential to work closely with good literature as an integral part of writers' workshop. Ongoing collaborative planning and reflection helped us articulate the role literature would play in our students' learning and what we noticed about our students' knowledge and experience in reading and appreciating literature. We not only shared resources but analyzed them for their pedagogical value as we planned our units.

Researching for Improved Practice

As we each entered each other's worlds and began to grapple with the issues associated with them, we each found that taking on a new role enriched our insights and gave us new ways of thinking about our work in general and about students' learning in particular. For example, the research process provided time and opportunity for Lindquist to reflect on her teaching practices and pursue issues in ways that she had not been able to before:

> I think the teacher as researcher role was especially helpful because when you're just thinking about how you can make things better for the kids you don't always take the time to stop and reflect about what is it that worked or why did or didn't it work in relationship to a bigger picture. Sometimes I think . . . when you're not thinking of it in those terms you just sort of think about what works and what doesn't, but *it's getting the why and trying to dig under some things.* That's the researcher role that came into play this year. (Lindquist interview, 7/11/91; emphasis added)

Getting at whether, why, and how learning was taking place undergirded both our teaching and research activities.

Researching and assessing students' thinking. Our data collection included taking field notes, audiotaping our conversations with our young writers, videotaping key lessons that we wanted to study later, keeping a journal of our thinking and impressions about our teaching and our students' learning, saving all written work, and interviewing students individually and in groups. As the year progressed, Lindquist also developed ways to research students' thinking and writing participation as part of her daily teaching. For example, she asked students to reflect in their journals after each unit to consider how they progressed as writers. At each report card time students were asked to write reflections on their progress. These reflections became an important part of our data set as we began to develop cases of students' writing development across the year and sought to understand the students' point of view. In addition, Lindquist began keeping a "status of the class" chart (Atwell, 1987, p. 91) that enabled her to record on a daily basis what each student was working on and to get an overview of the kinds of writing and collaboration the students undertook.

Our attempts as researchers to understand students' thinking and track their writing development caused us to think more deeply as teachers about assessing and reporting on students' learning across all three curriculum strands. This endeavor became especially focused when the first report cards were to be distributed, and we saw that there were no avenues for reporting on student progress in the learning setting we were developing. For example, there was no place on the report card to indicate that a student was willing to take risks, or had tried several new forms of writing, or was an especially good listener and respondent when others read their pieces, or had experimented with new descriptive techniques. To our dismay, most of

the things that we were emphasizing and valued in the classroom were invisible on the report card. We collaborated with other LISSS group members and the building principal and developed additional materials to accompany the report cards. These materials helped us communicate more clearly and concretely about the students' progress as writers and also helped students understand what was expected of them. The following is an example of some of the materials that were shared with students and sent home with their report cards in January:

Criteria for Writing

1. Actively participate in a variety of activities to stimulate thinking before writing.
2. Develop questioning strategies to clarify writing.
3. Interact with others in order to become a part of a community of writers.
4. Increase ability to understand that writing is an ongoing process.
5. Participate with other children in editing.
6. Use resources in writing projects.

The report card still included information about some aspects of the quality of students' written products (spelling, punctuation, sentence structure) and these criteria communicated that active engagement in the writing community was valued also.

Conducting research about our students' learning helped us address the same kinds of questions teachers face daily as they try to understand what students are learning. Daily teaching practices complemented the research process just as the research process informed our teaching, as Lindquist's reflections illustrate:

> I would say I think I learned a lot about this [assessment] this year. I really find it very interesting that the students very readily gave up the whole idea of me assessing their writing or feeling like they had to read it to me to make it worthwhile. . . . I liked the whole idea of setting up the criteria that we did for writing that had focused on the process and not the product. It's not that the product wasn't important, but I think that the kids began to see that good writing takes a long time, it's an ongoing process that they have to work on for a while. (Lindquist interview, 7/11/91)

We came to appreciate how much assessment practices influence what students pay attention to in the learning community and how they spend their time (Doyle, 1983).

Analysis of data on student thinking. Because we were interested in understanding how students participated in our writing community, their actual writing was only one source of information we used to document their development as writers. Field notes, audiotapes and videotapes of classroom lessons and conferences, and student interviews were also important sources of information for understanding the enacted curriculum (including subject matter content and the development of the social context for learning) as well as individual meaning constructed by students (including writing knowledge, skills and dispositions as well as their conceptions of themselves as writers). This rich and varied data set required an approach to analysis that would preserve the complexity of classroom life but also help us understand our students' thinking.

Our collaborative work in curriculum development and in approaches to assessment and reporting helped us articulate the subject matter that we intended for students to learn and the particular ways of participating in the learning community we valued. For example, ideas from our learning community curriculum strand and the criteria for writing used with the students helped us create the categories we developed to code students' learning community participation: ownership and

commitment to writing tasks, using a variety of resources in writing projects, asking questions to clarify thinking, participating in a variety of activities to stimulate thinking, engaging in purposeful editing, engaging in writing as an ongoing process, and increasing control over multiple aspects of the writing process. Similarly, ideas from our subject matter curriculum strands (the writing process and literary understanding and appreciation) and the criteria for writing helped us develop the categories we used to trace students' growth in writing knowledge, skills, and dispositions to write: themes explored in writing, writing style and voice, forms of writing experimented with and used, use of language structures and mechanics, and awareness of and attention to audience.

As we began to use these two sets of categories to analyze the data, we found them helpful in tracking particular areas of growth. But we also searched for ways to preserve a more holistic picture of each student's writing development. We came up with four broad learning dimensions under which the previous categories would fit:

a. Subject matter learning (e.g., learning to write; understanding and using the writing process; developing literary understanding and appreciation)

b. Writing as an authentic experience (e.g., choosing to write; using writing for a variety of purposes; developing one's own purposes; deciding on appropriate form in relation to purpose)

c. Participation in the learning community (e.g., listening to and questioning other writers' pieces; giving thoughtful, helpful response; sharing)

d. Voice and engagement in writing (e.g., taking risks; trying new techniques, topics, skills and kinds of writing; communicating a sense of self in writing)

We used these learning dimensions to make sense of and communicate what we had learned about particular writers' development. We found that these dimensions capture both cognitive and affective aspects of students' learning as well as the nature of their participation in the learning community over time. Although we used them primarily for research purposes, we now see them as valuable and practical tools for assessing and communicating about students' learning on an ongoing basis.[5] For example, Lindquist revised her "criteria for writing" the following fall to include more specific and concrete criteria on learning community participation:

Writers' Workshop Expectations

1) Bring pencil, dialogue journal, writing folder and daybook when you come to class each day.

2) Read and write every day.

3) Finish pieces of writing.

4) Find topics you care about.

5) Date all journal and daybook entries and drafts of pieces.

6) Keep a Writing Process Summary sheet for each piece you write.

7) Take care of your writing folders and journals.

8) Make a daily plan for your writing and work on it during class.

9) Take care of the writing materials and resources provided for you.

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[5]We also used the four learning dimensions to develop a set of case study materials designed for use with preservice and experienced teachers interested in exploring one students' writing growth. The materials are designed so that users are encouraged to revise the dimensions according to their own teaching knowledge and experience. See Rosaen, C. L., & Lindquist, B. (in press). Understanding one writer's growth: Case study materials (Elementary Subjects Center No. 66). East Lansing: Michigan State University, Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects.

10) Do not do anything to disturb or distract other writers.

Moreover, the four learning dimensions organize her discussions with parents regarding students' writing development across the year.

Blurring the lines between being a teacher and a researcher and integrating research activities into the daily life of teaching provided us with new experiences and new perspectives with which to approach our work. We were able to see more and use these insights to enrich our teaching and research work. Bringing our unique expertise together and talking about our work regularly enabled us to do together what we could not do alone.

Time for sharing, talk, and support. Working together as teacher-researchers means bringing two professionals' knowledge, skills and insights to a complex undertaking. This kind of sharing requires time together for talking, problem solving, and sharing insights. Talking and sharing help provide moral support, and are ways to co-construct ideas, as shown in Lindquist's reflections:

> When you're in a classroom by yourself and things are going on, you can only have the discussions with yourself, but when you have a co-teacher in the room with you have somebody to talk over, "How do you think this kid is thinking about this?" [You] have somebody to share your ups and downs with, your frustrations, and things in setting the whole thing up.
>
> I found it extremely helpful to collaborate with other people in the teaching of writing. I think that it made for an opportunity to bounce ideas back and forth and not to feel the frustration and things.
>
> I really enjoyed having the adult contact and I enjoyed having somebody to talk over ideas maybe to get some new ideas. (Lindquist interview, 7/11/91)

Co-thinking--about children, subject matter, teaching strategies, curriculum development--was an integral part of our collaboration that offers a different form of assistance with reciprocity that is not typical in a traditional staff development

model where an expert teaches a novice what she knows (Feiman-Nemser & Rosaen, 1992). Rosaen recognized and appreciated this early in the relationship when she wrote the following in her journal:

> I really feel good about the way Barb felt comfortable asking me to see what I could do [with helping a student with her work]. I was hoping we could work alongside each other like this and get help from each other as needed. Puzzling together over working with kids is the kind of working relationship I was hoping for. We also seem to be on the same wave length for planning--thinking about what lessons would fit into the big picture, and how to weave them in. (Rosaen journal entry, 9/12/90)

Collaboration also requires time alone for study, reflection, and gathering of resources. It became a common sight for each of us to carry shopping bags full of books to a planning session, ones we had recently purchased or found in the library, or ones that we found on our shelves from previous years of teaching. It was also typical for us to trade copies of articles to read that informed our teaching or our research. All of our LISSS group members were part of this network, with our study group meetings providing a place, contact point, and forum for discussion. We relished this sharing, this participation in a literate community, and also found that it enriched our teaching and our research.

Despite the restructured day we had crafted for Lindquist and other teachers in the LISSS Project (teaching in the mornings and collaborating on planning and research in the afternoons), lack of time began to haunt us. We knew before we started the year that the teachers did not have enough time to plan to teach in ways they were thinking about, and here we had taken on an expanded role of doing research as well. As stress levels rose and the work levels increased, these frustrations surfaced:

> [The two project teachers] and I have struggled with issues of time (What are you doing with it?); place (Where are you doing it?); and trust (professionalism). Has PDS [professional development school] become like the institution it seeks to change? What about leadership, morality, integrity, and people who care? Where is the empowerment, the negotiation and dialogue to help us succeed in our new approaches to teaching and learning? (Lindquist, School Newsletter, April 15, 1991)

Time is a precious resource in any profession, and seems to be a pervasive theme in education as it relates to classrooms, curriculum construction, professional development, and professional interactions (cf. Ben-Peretz & Bromme, 1990). In our work across the past two years, we have seen that we desperately need time to share, talk, and support each other if our collaboration is to be effective. We also need time to be alone and study and reflect. We have learned that when there isn't enough time stress, anxiety, and frustration result. This is a high price to pay for interesting and challenging work. We have learned that we need to shape our agenda each year so that it fits within the time we have available even if that agenda does not include everything we feel we ought or want to do. We also have continued to seek creative approaches to solving time problems by finding natural overlap in our interests and responsibilities (e.g., courses we teach, curriculum topics that interest us, research questions) and shaping our joint work around these areas of overlap.

Learning From Collaboration

We have discussed benefits and drawbacks to the process of working together--what that process enabled us to *do* and *think about* as teacher-researchers. We now turn to considering more particularly what we *learned* from our collaboration beyond participating in it--the results of our year-long collaboration.

A Different Way of Teaching

During the first year of our project as we explored together the literature on taking a workshop approach to teaching writing (e.g., Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1983, 1986; Graves, 1983 and several journal articles), we each had an image of what it could entail. We also believed that there was no one way to teach writing and that it was up to us to create our own version that suited our students. Lindquist's reflections show her initial expectations:

> I also saw myself in a role *different* than I had experienced before in teaching writing. . . . I knew I was going to be doing some different things with writing and I wasn't sure how that would take shape. . . . It did turn out to be a different way of teaching than I had taught before, but it evolved over the course of the year. (Lindquist interview, 7/11/91)

Establishing a writers' workshop meant taking on a different role and figuring out how to implement the role, what actual strategies to use and how to interact with students was not an easy undertaking. We proceeded cautiously, experimenting with different ways of talking with students about their writing, trying to figure out ways to help them realize their own intentions as writers instead of their more traditional approach of trying to figure out what the teacher wants. This required considerable analysis of our teaching. The following excerpt illustrates how Rosaen shared her reflections with Lindquist regarding a writing conference with the twofold aim of understanding what had happened in the conference, why she developed the focus she did, and trying to figure out whether the actions taken were appropriate:

> So for example, I sat down with a kid named Casey, who I think has written nothing yet that he's invested in. I looked at one piece that was on just a bunch of sort of free-writing, recording what was happening on one day. And the next piece was on "what I'm doing to do tomorrow." Just these blah, "I'll write anything down." What he's seeing though, is "Gee, if I do this every day I'm not having any fun." So today he was

> looking at this pop-up haunted house book that I had brought in for a lesson with the haunted house writing and he said, "Can I make a pop-up book like this?" And he was only looking at the visuals and the pictures and none of the writing. So I said, "Well, let's look at the writing on the page and what it means to write a book like this." So I had him do a couple of the pages and we talked about what's at the bottom and so forth, and how he could make a dummy copy of the book first and plan out what would be on the next page and what would be at the bottom and then start making his book.
>
> Now I think he finally has a piece that he's working on that he might really care about. I heard him walk out of the room today and say to Barb, "I'm going to take this home tonight and work on it tonight." It was his dummy copy on notebook paper. Maybe not, but I think he's close, he's finally engaged in the process of picking something he cares about. We [Rosaen and Lindquist] talked about that the week before last; it's clicking with him finally. I feel like that's fine. If he ever knows that it's important to pick a topic that he cares about, I think that's wonderful. So it's gradually coming. (Rosaen interview, 11/27/90)

Along with ongoing reflections about writing conferences, we listened to audiotapes of conferences, analyzed what each conference was about, and anticipated the effect conferences might have on the students in their next steps in drafting a piece and on their long-term approaches to writing. Then we would watch carefully to see what happened over time. In this way, we were honing our skills at talking with students about their writing in relation to what we were able to see in their participation and learning.

We have already said a great deal about how collaborative planning and teaching caused us to make explicit our ideas about curriculum and reflect on our teaching. As we taught lessons to develop particular curriculum strands, we analyzed ways in which the lessons were (or were not) succeeding. Rosaen's journal entry was written after a mini-lesson on revising that she taught early in the year. It reveals issues that were salient to us and ones that we often discussed after writers' workshop--whether students understood the substantive point(s) of the lesson, and

whether they were developing dispositions and attitudes that reflected commitment to writing and our learning community:

> I tried to emphasize the notion of the kids helping me with my draft and can see that they're not invested in that notion. They're not used to (?) or don't feel obligated to be helpful to me as a writer, so that's something we need to work on establishing over time. We are not yet a community of writers, but instead a class of kids who complete school assignments. (Rosaen journal entry, 9/12/90)

This was *our* writers' workshop that we both felt committed to. Our joint commitment enabled us to use each other as resources for our own professional learning--in developing new teaching strategies and skills, in figuring out new ways to structure the curriculum, in identifying issues that needed further attention and in figuring out what students were learning.

Lindquist's reflections show how her understanding of a writers' workshop expanded from the notion that it is teaching a process to a rich picture of a curriculum that must be developed along multiple strands and of relationships with her students that promote their independence as writers:

> I'm not sure I've talked enough about what I've learned about teaching writing. I definitely feel like I've learned a lot. . . I think to put it in a nutshell. . . it's not just teaching a process and if I teach these steps . . . they'll be able to go through and write. That's true, they'll be able to go through and write and they'll be able to know those steps, but that's not necessarily going to make them want to write or make them a better writer or to make them think about their writing. They're just going to be going through the motions and getting it done.
>
> And I think what I learned about writing this year is that students, when given the time, they'll come to value it and even if they're acting like they don't like it, they certainly did a lot of thinking and talking about their writing in class this year--much more than I've ever had students think and talk and discuss writing, and really enjoy English class, and pick writing as one of their favorite subjects. That just hasn't happened in the past, and I know that a lot of that has to do with them feeling comfortable, being given the opportunity to make a lot of choices on their own, and it wasn't hard to give that up. I didn't find that difficult, giving up the control, I guess is what you'd call it, over their classroom assignments. In fact I found that very pleasant to

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> give that up. It seemed much happier and much more rewarding to everybody for them to make some decisions about what they wanted to talk about themselves. (Lindquist interview, 7/11/91)

Lindquist reflected on the importance of allowing enough time for relationships to develop and for students to experiment and actually write. She also came to appreciate particular qualities teachers need to foster a writing community, such as patience:

> What my experience taught me is that it takes a lot of patience and a lot of time and that it's OK to take the time. I think before I felt like I was taking time to develop something but I wasn't giving the kids enough time to do what they needed to do. And it also takes a lot of patience and a lot of working with them and talking things over with them. (Lindquist interview, 7/11/91)

As Rosaen also worked on developing her knowledge and skills in teaching a writer's workshop with fifth graders, she noticed that it influenced the way she approached planning and teaching her language arts methods course at the university. She noted, for example, that a university requirement of giving the preservice students a course syllabus with assignments, grading procedures and readings already chosen in advance work against developing the norms these students learn to promote with children in elementary classrooms. Rosaen has come to think of her preservice students as developing *writers* as well as developing *teachers*, as evidenced in her comments about her methods class:

> I saw a lot of growth in Karla compared to the way she approached assignments last year. She used to come to me with the assignment sheet in her hand and go, "Now what do you mean by this? What do you mean by that? Should I do this?" Today she said, "I like the first two pages of this statement; I can't believe that I wrote this. I'm really happy with it." . . . She made all the decisions about it, had some ideas worked out, and was excited about it. I felt like rewriting this paper was not going to be a bad experience for her at a it was like, "I'm ready to rewrite this." So as an instructor, I'm t. ng like this writing has really served some real purposes for her a: I'm hoping that she will see that. . .

> I'm hoping that these [preservice] students are getting some messages about the use of writing here that they'll see fits themselves a little bit too and not just little kids. . . My goal was to have it be more than just be a bunch of assignments that they get credit for and I think many of them are seeing it that way. (Rosaen interview, 11/27/90)

Grappling With Curriculum Tensions

We began the year with a rough image of how we wanted to create a writers' workshop, and co-constructed the image across the year. This meant devoting a tremendous amount of time to developing new curriculum to replace the old. Beyond the time and patience required in teaching a writers' workshop, we both devoted numerous hours to exploring literature that would provide models and be a stimulus for our young writers. Our exploration was guided by our curriculum strands and a desire to experiment with ways to engage students in writing about issues related to topics they had studied in social studies class and helping them become aware of the role of audience in their writing. As we introduced various literature in our mini-lessons, we found ourselves doing further planning based on students' responses:

> We started our Authors' Design unit last week. We began with the poem "Dancing Teepees," an assembly, a movie, etc. and were disappointed in our students' lack of engagement in Native American issues. We ended up redesigning the plans using an "inside out" approach, getting them actively involved first, then getting them to use new ideas. . . . Trying to move into content area writing without also being the content area teacher [in social studies] is proving to be very difficult. . . .Is there a problem with the subject matter we selected for this unit? Maybe we should move to the "Girls Can Too" issue to bring some of this closer to home! (Rosaen journal entry, 2/26/91)

By paying attention to the sense students were making as part of our ongoing research, we were constantly made aware of the need to rethink our goals and redesign ways to head toward them. What "worked" with one class did not necessarily succeed with another, especially as the year progressed and students took charge of their own learning with more assertiveness. The passive students who would

dutifully complete school assignments at the beginning of the year were not so willing to comply as the year progressed; we were succeeding in fostering independence in our learners. The more we learned about the students, their learning needs, and the learning community that evolved, the more complex our curriculum development task became. Fortunately, our inquiring stance helped us become learners alongside our students. As the year progressed we did not develop curriculum to teach *to* our students, but to explore *with* them (Rowland, 1984). When we interviewed students at the end of the year we could see they felt ownership for what happened in the writing workshop and they even offered us advice about how we should have constructed the curriculum:

> Interviewer: What advice would you give to other students your age about improving your writing?
>
> Student: [You teachers] should start out the year with the All About Me, and then do the authors' exploration unit. I didn't get that much out of the five senses. Don't wait until the end of the year to do authors' exploration. (Student interview, 5/29/91)

As everyone became learners in our learning community, we found that we had some new teachers!

Analysis of our yearlong curriculum in relation to our students' learning and participation in our writing community has helped us identify two key tensions in our curriculum development. By becoming aware of and examining the tensions in the context of our own teaching we are in a better position to think carefully about the curriculum decisions we make. We call them tensions because they seem to be issues to balance or manage and do not lend themselves to resolution (Lampert, 1985; Rosaen, 1989). One tension is embedded in the teacher-student relationship and how it impacts and is impacted by the curriculum. When and how should teachers take

the lead in curriculum development by deciding on unit topics and substance, structuring assignments, and what counts as learning, thereby expecting the students to follow their lead? Alternatively, when and how should teachers structure their teaching so students construct their own curriculum, providing ways for them to make their own choices, pace themselves, follow their own interests, and judge the quality of their own writing and thereby follow the students' lead? These are not new questions but instead are questions that have been raised by many educators who have taught writing and/or researched the teaching of writing (e.g., Calkins, 1983, 1986; Lensmire, 1991; Rosaen, 1989, 1990; Rowland, 1984).

When we considered these questions in relation to our own curriculum, we noticed that we took both approaches at different times across the year, and there are advantages and disadvantages associated with each. While our more structured units in laying the groundwork served the purposes of creating shared experiences that enabled us to support particular aspects of the writing process, they also limited our students' opportunities to make some important decisions as writers (e.g., writing topic and genre). Yet when we opened up the curriculum to students by sharing control over some decisions such as selection of writing topics and genres, although there was much enthusiasm for writing, we found it much more difficult to get some students to pay attention to issues of quality in their writing and to support their active pursuit of quality in their writing. We have not come up with particular answers to our questions or ready-made solutions to the problems we identified. By becoming more aware of this tension in curriculum development, teachers can make more reasoned judgments about when and why they will pursue a particular end of the continuum of control over the curriculum. There may be times when it makes

more sense to take the lead, and others when it is more appropriate for students to be involved fully in all phases of decision making, depending on the students, the time of year, the nature of the writing community and the curriculum goals.

A second tension is embedded in the learning community itself and has to do with balancing the academic and social needs of the individual and the writing community as a whole. Our analysis of how our learning community evolved across the year got us to wonder about two kinds of questions that had also been raised by many teachers and researchers (e.g., Atwell, 1987; Hill & Hill, 1990; Vacca & Rasinski, 1992). In planning and teaching, how can teachers accommodate both the academic and social needs of the group and the needs of the individual? When should teachers take an active role in facilitating the way group norms develop and when should they stand back and wait for naturally occurring opportunities to reflect with their students about the way people interact? We do not think there are clear-cut answers to these questions either. During the initiation phase of our curriculum, for example, we could see that some students began to flourish immediately in a more open environment while others floundered over how to use their new rights and responsibilities productively. We debated as to how much we should "interfere" in the naturally occurring process as students encountered new ways to interact about their writing.

We met with the most success when we did not separate social and academic goals. Mini-lessons became our vehicle for supporting the group's academic and social needs. For example, we offered mini-lessons on receiving pieces, ways to listen to the author to understand his or her intentions and ways to provide constructive and specific feedback. Writing conferences became our vehicle for supporting

individuals' academic and social needs. Yet as the year progressed we met with some resistance from students who wanted more writing time and less time spent with the whole group. We also noticed that some students did not follow through on the revision ideas we discussed the day before in a writing conference; that they were not necessarily motivated to improve their pieces, especially when their friend's piece did not require further attention and theirs did.

We met these challenges daily as the workshop progressed, always debating which ends of each continuum to emphasize--social and academic, group and individual--and weighing the pros and cons of each emphasis. By understanding that these tensions are endemic to curriculum development and creating learning communities, teachers are in a better position to consider appropriate and alternative courses of action.

Learning from Our Students.

Implicit in much of our discussion so far is the notion that our students were our teachers also. By listening carefully to them and studying their work with an eye toward understanding their thinking, we have gained some important insights. Out of the 47 fifth graders we taught, we selected 17 target students whose progress we followed closely across the year. As we analyzed their written work, interviews, and participation in the writing community we discovered some areas of overlap. For instance, although the timing and content of the incidents varied for different students, we noticed that there were occasions where particular incidents served as a "turning point" for students, marking a point in time when their progress as writers changed dramatically.

We adopted Newman's (1990) term "critical incidents" because we saw these incidents as being "those occurrences that let us see with new eyes some aspect of what we do" (p. 17). While Newman applies the term to teachers who are made aware of the beliefs and assumptions that underlie their instructional practices, we thought of critical incidents for our students as those that caused them either to become aware of their beliefs and assumptions about what it means to be a writer or to change what they do as writers. The following example describes a critical incident that caused Billy to change his notion of whether he could become an adventure writer:[6]

> Billy is a school-smart kid who can whip off any assignment he is given. After about three months of writers' workshop, he is still having trouble seeing himself as a writer capable of generating his own topics. One day Dr. Rosaen is encouraging him to try an adventure story, since he so enjoys reading adventure stories. However, Billy is convinced that he can't write an adventure story. Dr. Rosaen tells him that she could help him learn to write adventure stories and to let her know when he's ready for her help. Later that day, Billy calls her over and says, "I'm ready to become an adventure writer now." Billy later collaborates with another student in writing an adventure story, and publishes it for the school library. (Critical Incidents, handout for State of Writing Conference, April 18, 1991)

Brenda's story shows how she not only participated differently in the writing process, but also became aware of her own changes:

> After the class had spent about two weeks working on their first writing project for the year, they were asked to reflect on their learning as writers. Brenda wrote, "I was thinking when we were doing the All About Me assignment, 'Oh this will be easy, I'll just write a few things about me and put them on paper.' But NO! You have to fix things and make them more interesting to read. Now I think that describing is

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[6]Also see Rosaen, C. L., & Lindquist, B. (1992). Literacy curriculum-in-the-making: A Case study of Billy's learning (Elementary Subjects Series No. 58). East Lansing: Michigan State University, Institute for Research on Teaching, Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects. This case study describes four critical incidents and discusses ways in which they influenced Billy's growth as a writer.

more interesting and it helps you know the person more I think." (Critical Incidents, handout for State of Writing Conference, April 18, 1991)

Working to figure out which incidents or experiences may have led to particular students' changes in attitudes, values, beliefs and actions as writers helps us learn more about creating meaningful learning experiences for all of our students.

Our students also taught us about issues of ownership and control in a writers' workshop setting where teachers are attempting to share control of the curriculum with students more democratically. By tracing Yolanda and Sarah's learning and participation across the year, we saw that they evolved from seeking a great deal of teacher response to and approval of their writing to becoming independent writers who were able to make their own judgments and decisions. The girls' collaboration across the year enabled Yolanda, a rather withdrawn and shy student, to learn what it means to participate in a small writing community (composed of Sarah and occasionally some friends outside of class or a small group within the class). In a writing community where participation was valued and rewarded as much as creating finished products Yolanda enjoyed academic success that she had not experienced previously. Sarah, a rather outspoken student who was academically successful and tended to dominate conversations, learned the value of collaborating and listening to others.

As Yolanda and Sarah became more comfortable in the writing community, tensions surrounding control of the curriculum began to surface. The theme of resistance (to teacher-initiated lessons, topic ideas, suggested book explorations, and to using record-keeping devices) emerged throughout the latter part of the year. The girls interpreted their newly found control as absolute, and resisted teacher

input as either irrelevant, poorly timed, or unnecessary. At times, the curriculum was a "struggle" rather than a "negotiation." Sarah and Yolanda taught us to think more deeply about issues and tensions teachers face as they share control with students and negotiate the curriculum in a writers' workshop. They also got us to consider how our actions may have contributed unintentionally to the struggle.

Close examination of our students' learning and participation also taught us about integrated *learning* even though integrated *teaching* was not planned purposefully. Studying student interview responses and classroom interactions within the language arts area caused us to reexamine our data from cross-disciplinary perspectives. For example, we asked ourselves: How did students integrate science and social studies knowledge, skills and ways of knowing with their development as writers? LISSS teacher-researchers discovered unique ways in which individual students constructed their own integration within and across subject matter areas.[7]

In writing, students used ideas from social studies and science (e.g., sexism, discrimination, and empathy) in their development as writers. For example, as women and girls became visible for Brenda as a result of her studies in social studies and science classes, she became a more vocal and visible girl in writers' workshop when she challenged a male classmate to explain why he did not include girls in his

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[7]See the following set of papers for detailed analyses of students' integration: Rosaen, C. L., Lindquist, B., Peasley, K., & Hazelwood, C. (in press). Integration from the student perspective: Constructing meaning in a writer's workshop (Elementary Subjects Series Report No. 62). Hasbach, C., Hazelwood, C., Hoekwater, E., Roth, K., Michell, M. (in press). Holistic Literacy: Voices integrating classroom texts in social studies (Elementary Subjects Series Report No. 63). Roth, K., Peasley, K., & Hazelwood, C. (in press). Integration from the student perspective: Constructing meaning in science (Elementary Subjects Series No. 64). East Lansing: Michigan State University, Institute for Research on Teaching, Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects.

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story. She not only noticed that girls were invisible, but voiced her concern about it, integrating her knowledge and actions across a variety of experiences. As we looked across our analyses of student learning (science, social studies, writing) we found common characteristics in our teaching of the three subjects that helped us explain what might be enabling students to make interesting and powerful connections both within and across subject matter areas. Three broad commonalities suggest that our teaching across these subjects was integrated in ways that we had not recognized at the outset: (a) similar features of the learning community (see our earlier discussion of our learning community curriculum strand), (b) teachers' viewing knowledge as tentative and socially constructed, and (c) centering curriculum development around students' thinking and experiences.

These three commonalities across our classrooms gave us a new framework for thinking about integration from the students' perspectives. This framework for thinking about what may have supported integrated *learning* is challenging our thinking about integrated *teaching*. We began our research assuming that we were not engaged in integrated teaching. But our students showed us some exciting ways in which they were making significant connections among ideas that we never planned or expected. They challenged us to rethink our definition of integrated teaching: What is integrated teaching? What does it look like? We will continue to examine and question our emerging framework as we continue our collaboration.

New Teacher Education Opportunities.

For teacher-researchers, being in the classroom on a regular basis validates the learning theories they teach in their methods classes, and brings the theories to life:

> This is an opportunity to see first-hand the norms students bring to the classroom regarding what it means to learn to write (which confirmed my suspicions that 5th graders are like 9th graders in this sense), and to try ways to develop alternative norms. I am seeing first-hand the importance of the relationship between students and the teacher, and among students, and the importance of getting kids to truly collaborate instead of working in parallel (like preschoolers). (Rosaen journal entry, 1/21/91)

Our teacher-researcher arrangement afforded an unusual teacher education opportunity. Lindquist's student teacher, Derek, was taking a methods class taught by Rosaen. As Derek was doing field assignments in our classroom, there were multiple learning opportunities and difficulties for all three as we planned a unit together. In her journal, Rosaen identified some insights into the planning process she gained from working with Derek (instead of just hearing about his planning), and some questions that arose out of the complex arrangement:

> Derek raised my level of consciousness about what's confusing to a novice (e.g., the complexity of implementing a writers' workshop), and how a novice is interpreting ideas we are learning [in methods class]. His suggestion of using a worksheet to scaffold the conferencing--I think he got the idea of needing to support students' learning, but didn't understand (because of lack of experience) how kids would reduce the conferencing process down to a list if given one. Difficulties: whose agenda in the planning will prevail if there are differences in viewpoints, preferences, etc. How much compromising really has to go on so we end up with a lesson plan? Whose job is it to make sure Derek is supported in making sense of his field experiences? I think both Barb and I have some responsibility. I think our multiple layers of planning are confusing to Derek, and that he needed more support with the subject matter than either of us had time to give him. I also felt somewhat conflicted about my role in this classroom in terms of his learning. (Rosaen journal entry, 1/21/91)

Derek's presence in the classroom and in our collaborative work arrangement meant bringing another learner's needs to an already complex situation. We struggled to bring him into the relationship in ways that would benefit him and still benefit the children and our own curriculum goals. Rosaen's journal describes the

kinds of issues we wrestled with regarding whether we were able to meet Derek's needs within the time constraints we had:

> Was it beneficial for him to be part of our struggles? Did he have enough privacy (like other methods class students had) to try ideas out and learn from his successes and failures? Did he have enough input or were we just "letting" him contribute? What alternatives did we have to the way we organized this? I'm also unclear about how much of the work that Barb and I were doing together was really communicated clearly to Derek. Perhaps he got the information in too many bits and pieces. (Rosaen journal entry, 1/21/91)

We learned that we need sufficient time to support novices in their learning through participating in our collaboration. We also raised significant questions about how we can create conditions for collaboration among experienced and inexperienced teachers that are productive and comfortable for all the participants.

Research as Teaching and Professional Talk.

When research becomes an ongoing part of teaching, it plays an important role in professional learning. Our sense making started with our collaboration, with our joint study, and with our ongoing professional talk. Instead of waiting for "research results," we used what we were learning as we taught and as we conducted our research in a recursive manner. In this way, the research process informed our teaching and helped us think through complex teaching and learning issues. Likewise, as we got better at learning about our students and working with them in a learning community, we gained richer insights about the sense students were making. Teaching and researching were integrally connected and complemented each other.

We worked with the LISSS teacher-researchers to grapple with ways to talk with a broader professional community. We wanted to find ways to communicate about our research activities and about the kind of learning community we were

participating in with each other and with our students. As our group prepared for several conference presentations (for both research and teacher audiences), and for visitations to undergraduate and graduate classes, we experimented with forms that were alternatives to the usual condensed "show and tell" talks. We wanted to talk *with* professionals about our work. We told stories that raised questions, developed a quilting metaphor that communicates our visions for our classrooms and our students' and our learning,[8] designed quilting patterns that represented units we had developed and taught, shared samples of students' work, and showed clips of videotapes that gave the flavor our classroom life--all to stimulate discussion our work. We were able to break out of the traditional presentation mold by challenging each other to be creative, to think of ways to get our audience actively involved, to identify what is essential to share about our learning community. This is just a beginning for finding ways to communicate about research for teaching, but an important one.

Our joint work in this area has added up to more than finding better ways to talk to educators. It has helped us rethink and redefine our visions of what classrooms should look like, our images of the roles teachers and students take on, our notions of subject matter and how one comes to know, our knowledge and use of particular teaching strategies and skills, and our understandings or how our personal histories have shaped our views of teaching, learning and subject matter; that is, joint study, teaching, inquiry and reflection have contributed significantly to multiple areas of our personal and professional learning.

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[8]See ESC Report No. 62 cited first in previous footnote.

Visions of New and Complex Roles for Teachers and Researchers

Our reflections on our collaborative work as teacher-researchers have taught us that this work is very rewarding and productive, and are helping us find ways to engage students genuinely in their education and to create classrooms that are learning settings for *all* students. Collaboration is a source of intellectual and emotional support for improving teaching practices that has not been tapped sufficiently by school and university faculty. The main disadvantage to this kind of work is the time required for this very complex and demanding work. When there is not enough time to take full advantage of the collaborative teacher-researcher role, learning opportunities can be minimized and frustration and anxiety may disrupt what can be done and learned in such a setting. It is imperative that collaborative work agendas be realistic and complement the work teachers and researchers already do.

We have illustrated how the collaborative teacher-researcher role is an avenue for acknowledging, formalizing, and extending the kinds of reflection teachers already do as part of their daily practice. However, this kind of work cannot be undertaken without restructuring teachers' work patterns so the time and support required are available. We have also shown how the collaborative teacher-researcher role is an avenue for extending and enriching researchers' learning so that research becomes experiential learning (Cole, 1989) grounded in the realities and complexities of daily classroom life. University faculty's work patterns also require restructuring so that the time and support are available and the work is valued and rewarded within the university culture. Effective and productive collaboration takes a great deal of time and is extremely demanding work. Reward

structures for both school and university faculty need to be more responsive to these new ways of spending time and new ways of communicating about the work in which teacher-researchers engage. When teachers take time to reflect and write it should be valued as much as classroom teaching, after-school activities, or formal study. When researchers take time to collaborate with teachers in classrooms it should be valued as much as teaching at the university or writing scholarly chapters and articles. Our voices need to be listened to, heard, and our work needs to be valued in the larger professional community.

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